

so that he could adopt what was most useful and sound. In the same way he drew to his service men famous in war or in counsel, especially preferring the transalpine and the French nations as most warlike and because he traced his own origin from the Normans.¹ He showed as great an inclination to the work and the details of civil government as of war, conquest, and diplomacy. His historian, Alexander of Telese, represents him as spending his spare time in poring over accounts. Like a Frederick, he had no ministers but only "heads of departments," like Philip II. and like Louis XIV., whose power was scarcely more absolute than his own, he summed up in himself the State, loved to see personally into all the daily workings of government, and was himself his own chief clerk.

The cruelty displayed by Roger in his campaigns was, if we take the evidence of contemporaries, far beyond the practices of the age. His treatment of his rival Rainulf's body and his vindictive triumph at the end of the twelve years' war are bitterly resented by Falco of Benevento when he entered Troia in 1133, the completeness of his revenge upon the Prince of Bari and his

supporters in 1139, his inflexible
determination
against certain of his insurgents, all
show his
tendency to sustained and calculated
savagery,
to a vindictiveness that burned
white-hot, To
the historian of Benevento he is worse
than Nero,^a

* Falcandus, *Del R&*, i., pp. 286-7. »Falco, 1133.